

Urban District Council of  
Beaconsfield

*REPORT*

OF THE

*Medical Officer of Health*

For the Year 1946

T. P. EVANS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH



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Council Hall,  
Beaconsfield,  
Bucks.  
June, 1947.

*To the Chairman and Members of the  
Beaconsfield Urban District Council.*

Sir,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1946.

As will be seen from Page 13 of the report, the period under review has been characterised by the number of the rarer kinds of infectious fevers notified during the year. The notifications included cases of brucellosis, of glandular fever, an outbreak of diphtheria at a children's convalescent home due to a "carrier", a case of typhoid fever and a presumptive case of smallpox. This range and variety of notifiable infectious disease is, of course, exceptional.

During the year under review, the National Health Service Act, 1946, became law. Under Part III of the Act, the present major authorities, that is, the County Councils and the County Borough Councils, became local Health Authorities. They will be responsible for the provision of such personal services as vaccination against smallpox, immunisation against diphtheria ambulance services, midwifery and Home Nursing, Health Visiting and Domestic Helps throughout the whole of their areas. The appointed day upon which the Act will come into force is the 5th July, 1948. The Local Health Authority for this Council's area is the Bucks County Council. The Beaconsfield Council will continue as the Local Sanitary Authority.

As with so many other local authorities, the provision of more houses is still the most pressing problem with which this Council is faced. Nevertheless, despite such handicaps as bad weather, the shortage of labour and materials, there is progress to report. During the year, 34 new dwellings were completed. Of these, sixteen were built by the Council itself

and eighteen by private enterprise. The total number of dwellings owned by the Council is now 240. The Council's post-war Housing plans make provision for the building of a further 116 dwellings.

The percentage figures of children immunised against diphtheria remains satisfactory. The figures for the year ending the 31st December, 1946 were as follows :

0-5 Age Group  
81.5%

5-15 Age Group  
80%

It is again, in conclusion, my very pleasing duty to thank my colleagues and other officers of the Council for their active co-operation during the year, and in particular I wish to thank the Council's Sanitary Inspector and Engineer, Mr. Crosby, for his cordial co-operation. Finally, Mr. Chairman and Councillors, I would like to thank you for your kindly assistance throughout the year.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

T. P. EVANS,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*

## ARRANGEMENT OF THE REPORT.

### **A General and Vital Statistics**

1. Special Conditions.
2. Area : Population.
3. Births and Deaths.

### **B Health Services**

1. Laboratory Facilities.
2. Ambulance Facilities.
3. Nursing.
4. Clinics and Hospitals.

### **C Sanitary Circumstances of the Area**

1. Sanitary Inspection.
2. Water Supply.
3. Sewerage and Sewering.
4. Refuse Collection and Disposal.
5. Salvage.
6. Cesspools.
7. Nuisances.
8. Sanitary Accommodation.
9. Disinfection.
10. Rodent Control.

### **D Housing**

### **E Inspection and Supervision of Food**

1. Milk Supply.
2. Meat.

### **F Welfare Foods**

### **G Infectious Diseases**

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## STAFF

### **Medical Officer of Health**

T. P. EVANS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

### **Sanitary Inspector**

JOHN H. CROSBY, F.I.A.S., F.I.S.E., M.R.S.I.

## A. General and Vital Statistics

### 1. *Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area*

Area (acres) of District .. .. .	5,314
Number of Inhabitable Houses (per Rate Book)	1,769
Rateable Value of Area .. .. .	£80,500
Sum-represented by 1d. Rate .. .. .	£328

### 2. *Population*

The Registrar General's population figure is 6,538. According to the Food Office records the population is estimated at approximately 7,000.

### 3. *Births and Deaths*

#### *Births*

(a) <i>Live Births</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Birth Rate per 1,000 population .. ..	..	..	16.6
Birth Rate—England and Wales .. ..	..	..	19.1
Legitimate .. .. .	52	45	97
Illegitimate .. .. .	8	4	12

#### (b) *Still Births*

Legitimate .. .. .	2	1	3
Illegitimate .. .. .	—	—	—

#### *Deaths.*

(a) Deaths from puerperal causes .. ..	1
(b) Deaths of Infants under one year of age ..	1
Deaths of Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	10.3

#### *Infantile Mortality.*

All infants per 1,000 live births .. ..	9.2
England and Wales .. .. .	43.0

<i>Diseases</i>			<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Heart Disease .. ..	..	..	9	14	23
2. Cancer .. ..	..	..	10	9	19
3. Cerebral Hæmorrhage ..	..	..	1	1	2
4. Other circulatory diseases ..	..	..	1	0	1
5. Pneumonia .. ..	..	..	2	3	5
6. Bronchitis .. ..	..	..	1	0	1
7. Other respiratory diseases ..	..	..	1	1	2
8. Tuberculosis .. ..	..	..	3	0	3
9. Peptic Ulcers .. ..	..	..	1	1	2
10. Other digestive diseases ..	..	..	1	1	2
11. Nephritis .. ..	..	..	0	1	1
12. Birth Diseases .. ..	..	..	1	0	1
13. Other violent causes .. ..	..	..	2	0	2
14. All other causes .. ..	..	..	1	5	6
			<hr/> 34	<hr/> 36	<hr/> 70

## **B Health Services in the Area**

### *1. Laboratory Facilities*

As in previous years these continue to be provided by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service, Park Place, Oxford.

### *2. Ambulance Services*

As from 8th July, 1948, under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, it will be the duty of the Bucks County Council to make provision for securing that ambulances and other means of transport, where necessary, for the conveyance of persons suffering from illness, mental defectiveness or expectant mothers from places in their area to places in or outside their area.

During the year under review the Beaconsfield Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade has maintained the Ambulance Service in their Council's area, and by courtesy of Lt.-Col. Hunt, M.B., B.S.D.P.H., I am appending statistics showing the work done during the year.



				1944	1945	1946
<i>Invalids</i>	...	...	...	200	239	183
<i>Road Accidents</i>	...	...	...	21	10	17
<i>Other Accidents</i>	...	...	...	11	15	16
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Mileage</i>	...	...	...	4,280	5,542	3,967

### 3. *Nursing in the Home*

The following Nurse Midwives practised in the town during the year 1946.

Mrs. B. Craft, S.R.N., S.C.M., Q.N. 1st January-30th November, 1946.

Miss M. Stockley, S.R.N., S.C.M., Q.N. 1st January-29th August, 1946.

Miss M. E. Hopes, S.R.N., S.C.M., Q.N. 1st-31st December, 1946.

Mrs. L. A. Ayling, S.C.M. 1st-31st December, 1946.

The address for all these Nurses was 63, Wycombe End, Beaconsfield, telephone number Beaconsfield 824.

In addition to attending cases at their houses, the nurses gave their services to the monthly Welfare Clinics held at the Old Rectory.

### 4. *Clinics and Hospitals*

#### **NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946**

(Determination of Regional Hospital Areas).

#### **Statutory Rules and Orders No. 2158/1946.**

Under Section II of the above Act, the Minister of Health was empowered to constitute Regional Hospital Boards for such areas as he may, by order, determine for the purpose of exercising functions with respect to the administration of hospital and specialist services in these areas.

In the provisional proposals of the Minister, the Urban District of Beaconsfield was, with the Borough of Slough, the Urban District of Eton and the Rural District of Eton, included in the North West London Regional Hospital Area. In the Order submitted to Parliament the Urban District of Beaconsfield remained in that Hospital area.

## C Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

### *Summary of Sanitary Inspector's Visits.*

#### 1. *Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year :*

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) .. .. .	16
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ..	30
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932 .. .. .	3
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ..	6
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation .. .. .	Nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ..	3

#### *Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices :*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers .. .. .	3
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#### *Proceedings under Public Health Acts :*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ..	12
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#### *Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding*

(a) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year .. .. .	25
(2) Number of families living therein .. ..	37
(3) Number of persons dwelling therein .. ..	133
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year .. .. .	25
(c) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year .. .. .	21
(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases ..	63

- (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding Nil

## 2. *Water Supply*

The water supply of the area has been satisfactory in both quality and quantity. Periodic samples are taken and both the bacteriological and chemical analyses are regarded as satisfactory.

A copy of an analyst's report on a sample taken during 1946 is published as Appendix I to this Report.

## 3. *Sewerage and Sewering*

Two Sewage Disposal Works serve the District. The Holtspur Bottom Works which is nearly 34 acres in extent and the Hedgerley Lane Works of about 26 acres. Both these works are now taking an increased amount of sewage owing to the considerable increase in population during the past 7 years. It will be necessary in the near future for an additional Sprinkler and improved humus tanks to be installed at the Holtspur Bottom Works. In addition the disposal of effluent by surface soakage at the Hedgerley Lane Works demands constant attention to prevent ponding in the soakage area, owing to the increase in the quantity of effluent.

During the year additional sewers were laid at :

- (a) Burkes End—A foul sewer.
- (b) Candlemas Mead Site for the new housing estate—foul and surface water sewers.
- (c) Burgess Wood Road South—Extension of main foul and surface water sewers is proceeding.

## 4. *Refuse Collection and Disposal*

This Council employs two vehicles on refuse collection and further effort is being made to provide a weekly collection of house refuse. Owing to the difficulty in obtaining sufficient labour and an increase in the amount of refuse due to heavy ash deposit from open cast coal, this has not been possible and the collection has varied from 10 to 16 days.

Refuse is disposed of by dumping, where possible by the controlled tipping method. The Council's dump for most of the year was at Harehatch Lane in the area of the Eton Rural

District Council, but difficulties having arisen in connection with the use of this site, arrangements were made to deposit our refuse in a worked-out gravel pit some 250 yards from Lilly Lee Farm and inside the Urban District boundary.

### 5. *Salvage*

This service is carried out by a hired lorry with driver and our Council workmen.

The amount of salvage collected during the year is as follows :

				Tons	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.
Waste paper	..	..		87	9	3	0
Bones	..	..	..	1	7	3	0
Textiles	..	..	..	5	9	3	14
Bottles	..	..	..	3	12	3	0
Metal	..	..	..		5	0	14
				—	—	—	—
				98	5	1	0
				—	—	—	—

Amount received for Sales—£796.

### 6. *Cesspools*

The emptying of cesspools is carried out by the Council's 750 gallon vacuum machine. Every endeavour is made to provide 24-hour service.

### 7. *Nuisances*

During the year 22 nuisances have been investigated ; these are chiefly defective drains, cesspools, and deposits of refuse. Considerable assistance is given in this matter by the workmen engaged in refuse collection and cesspool emptying. Each squad gives a daily report into the office in which any matter requiring attention is specially mentioned. It is then investigated, reported, and the necessary action taken.

### 8. *Sanitary Accommodation*

All houses, except several isolated farms, are provided with water closets.

### 9. *Disinfection*

Disinfection has been carried out in 19 cases following Infectious Diseases,

## 10. *Rodent Control*

This service is now directly under the Ministry of Food, and Mr. G. S. Grey is the Rodent Officer appointed by the Council and approved by the Ministry who contribute a large part of his salary.

The district has been surveyed and plotted and the scheme of block control kept in operation. The present position is considered to be good, but immediately on receipt of information action is taken and constant checks are made throughout the district.

## **D Housing**

Despite the heavy loss of working time due to bad weather, satisfactory progress has been made in the erection of new houses. During 1946, 16 houses were completed for the Urban District Council, whilst private enterprise built a further eighteen.

In addition, good progress has been made in site preparation and other essential preliminaries in connection with a further 116 houses in accordance with the Council's post-war housing programme.

## **E Inspection and Supervision of Food**

### 1. *Milk Supply*

There are 9 registered milk producers within the Council's area. The milk supply is generally speaking of good quality throughout the year, but two producers require rather more supervision than the remainder.

In connection with milk production, the Council will no doubt be aware that the Food and Drugs (Milk and Dairies) Act, 1944, is a measure with far-reaching consequences. The effect of the Act and of the revision of the relevant Regulations which it involves, will be to transfer to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, from a day to be appointed by the Minister of Health, the registration of dairy farms and dairy farmers and the control of clean milk production hitherto exercised by local authorities under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926 ; and also to make the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries the licensing authority under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations for producers of raw designated milks.



## 2. *Meat and other Foods*

There are three licensed slaughter-houses in the District, but due to Control by the Ministry of Food, no killing has been done apart from pigs for keeper's own use.

The following quantities of food were condemned during the year :

Tinned Meat	..	..	..	..	77 tins
Tinned Fish	..	..	..	..	31 tins
Tinned Fruit and Vegetables	..	..	..	..	26 tins
Tinned Milk	..	..	..	..	75 tins
Home killed and imported Meats	..	..	..	..	130½ lbs.
Wet Fish	..	..	..	..	29½ stone
Cereals	..	..	..	..	36 packets

## F *Welfare Foods*

From time to time statements are made concerning the war-time and post-war nutritional state of the nation.

In this connection it is interesting to note one of the great differences between the two great wars. In the 1939-45 war far greater attention was paid to the nutrition of the on-coming generation in the civilian population than in the previous 1914-18 war. The Ministry of Food early during the second war issued Welfare Foods, such as Cod Liver Oil, Orange Juice and tablets containing vitamins A and D to infants, young children and expectant mothers. These foods were at first issued free, but later at a small charge, through the local offices of the Ministry of Food. The uptake of these foods however was voluntary and remains so. The percentages of the potential uptake in the Beaconsfield District area are given below. They are compiled by the Ministry of Food during a sample four-week period in the middle of June, 1946 and show that the uptake of these foods in Beaconsfield is good and compares favourably with other districts.

ORANGE JUICE		COD LIVER OIL		A AND D TABLETS	
<i>Actual Weekly Uptake</i>	<i>Percentage of Potential Uptake</i>	<i>Actual Weekly Uptake</i>	<i>Percentage of Potential Uptake</i>	<i>Actual Weekly Uptake</i>	<i>Percentage of Potential Uptake</i>
240	81.6	17	20.0	5	45.5

## G Prevalence and Control of Infectious Diseases

As mentioned in the introduction of this Report, the year under review has been characterised by the occurrence of a number of the rarer kinds of infectious diseases. In addition to the cases set out in the table below, the following cases were notified :

- 1 case of Glandular Fever.
- 1 case of Brucellosis.
- 1 case of presumptive Smallpox.

### *Diphtheria*

Early in the year there was an outbreak of diphtheria at a Children's Convalescent Home. Following the notification of one child in the Home, a thorough investigation was undertaken of all the residents; in conjunction with the Field Medical Staff of the Public Health E.M.S. Laboratories, Oxford, the whole of the population of the Convalescent Home were investigated. This revealed two further clinical cases, one in a boy aged  $2\frac{1}{2}$ , and another in a Nurse aged 16. These cases were removed to Booker Isolation Hospital. It was decided to give the remaining population of the Nursery doses of serum to give active immunity for immediate protection, and also a first dose of passive immunisation. Each inmate was swabbed. In all 26 children and 13 adult members of the staff were dealt with in this way. As a result of bacteriological investigation a further four cases, three children and one nurse were discovered and admitted to Booker Hospital. Further investigation showed that one of these nurses appears to have been discharged from a Fever Hospital in 1938, and was then believed to be a "carrier". On the 12th February, 1946, the diphtheria bacilli isolated from her pharynx were virulent in type.

### *Presumptive Smallpox*

In October, 1946, I was called in consultation by a local doctor who suspected that a case of infectious disease might prove to be smallpox. On balance, I agreed, and on receipt of a report from the special laboratory of the Ministry of Health that "variola virus" had been isolated from the pus

and crust of the lesions, in conjunction with medical officers of the Ministry, I undertook appropriate action to prevent the spread of the disease. Sometime afterwards, further investigation by the same laboratory proved that the virus was that of Herpes simplex, and not of variola.

### *Glandular Fever*

This case was that of a Section Officer, W.A.A.F. home on demobilisation leave, having served four years in the Middle East. On clinical examination, the case was indefinite, but the Paul Bunnell agglutination test (sheep cells) showed agglutination in a Titre of from 1 in 5 to 1 in 3548 : the normal Titre being 1 in 5 to 1 in 56.

### *Typhoid Fever*

On Saturday, the 12th January, 1946, a case of Typhoid Fever was notified from a Nursing Home in an adjoining area. The patient had been admitted for a surgical operation, removal of gall bladder. In undertaking preliminary investigation, typhoid bacilli were isolated from the excreta.

It appears that during the previous Great War, the patient had suffered from typhoid, but although in the intervening 30 years there had been complaints of pain in the abdomen and in the gall bladder area, it was not until last year that any symptoms suggestive of the previous attack of typhoid came to light, and then only on routine investigations preliminary to operation.

## **Diphtheria Prophylaxis**

### *Immunisation against Diphtheria*

Since 1941, when a national campaign against Diphtheria was launched by the Ministry, remarkable progress has been made. In 1946 the numbers of cases and deaths were again the lowest ever recorded. Pre-war figures averaged about 58,000 cases and 2,800 deaths per year. The low record for deaths in 1946 means that for every 6 children who died from diphtheria before the war, only one died in 1946. The number of cases has fallen by 40,000.



## NUMBER OF CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

	Scarlet Fever M. F.	Whooping Cough M. F.	Measles M. F.	Diphtheria M. F.	Typhoid M. F.	Polio M. F.	Puerperal Pyrexia F.
Numbers originally notified. Civilians ... ..	1 1	3 —	13 12	4 3	— 1	— 1	6
Final Nos. after correction 0 ... ..	— —	2 —	3 —	1 —	— —	— —	— —
1 ... ..	— 1	1 —	2 1	3 1	— —	— —	— —
3 ... ..	— —	— —	8 10	— —	— —	1	— —
5 ... ..	1 —	— —	— 1	— —	— —	— —	— —
10 ... ..	— —	— —	— —	— 2	— —	— —	— —
15 ... ..	— —	— —	— —	— —	— 1	— —	— —
25 ... ..	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —
Total Civilians ....	1 1	3 —	13 12	4 3	— 1	— 1	6

*Return for Year ending 31st December, 1946.*

*Number of children permanently or temporarily resident in the Authority's area dealt with under arrangements made by the Authority or by the County Council.*

	Age under 5 years	5 years and over but un- der 15	Total
(1) Number of children completed full course during year .. .. .	33	15	48
	<i>Under 5</i>	<i>Between 5 and 15</i>	
(2) (a) Approximate estimated number of children in the Authority's area 31st December, 1946 .. .. .	420	800	
(b) What percentage of the child population shown under (a) is it considered were immunised at 31st December, 1946 .. .. .	81.5%	80%	
(3) (a) Number of cases of diphtheria in children under 15 years of age notified between 1st January and 31st December, 1946 .. .. .			5
(b) Number of cases included in (a) in which the child is known to have completed the course of immunisation not less than 12 weeks before the onset of the disease .. .. .			Nil
(c) Number of deaths from diphtheria .. .. .			Nil
(d) Number of deaths included in (c) in which the child is known to have completed the course of immunisation not less than 12 weeks before the onset of the disease .. .. .			Nil

## Appendix I.

## AMERSHAM, BEACONSFIELD AND DISTRICT WATER COMPANY.

## Copy of Chemical and Bacteriological Analyses.

## Chemical Results in Parts per Million.

Appearance . . . . .	Bright with a very slight deposit of mineral debris
Turbidity (Silica Scale) . . . . .	Less than 5
Colour (Hazen) . . . . .	Nil
Odour . . . . .	Nil
Reaction pH . . . . .	Neutral : 7.1
Free Carbon Dioxide . . . . .	28
Electric Conductivity at 20°C . . . . .	475
Total Solids, dried at 180°C . . . . .	320
Chlorine in Chlorides . . . . .	11
Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate . . . . .	240
Hardness—Total 265 . . . . .	Carbonate (Temporary) 240
	Non-carbonate (Permanent) 25
Nitrogen in Nitrates . . . . .	3.0
Nitrogen in Nitrites . . . . .	absent
Free Ammonia . . . . .	0.000
Albuminoid Ammonia . . . . .	0.000
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27°C . . . . .	0.05
Free Chlorine Reaction . . . . .	absent
Metals . . . . .	Iron : less than 0.03. Other metals absent. . .

## Bacteriological Results.

Number of Colonies developing on Agar per cc. or ml. in :

1 day at 37°C. : 0      2 days at 37°C. : 0      3 days at 20°C. : 0

Presumptive Coliform Reaction    Present in — Absent from 100 ml.

Bact. coli. . . . . Present in — Absent from 100 ml.

Cl. welchii Reaction . . . . . Present in — Absent from 100 ml.

This is a very satisfactory sample. It is clear and bright in appearance and of the highest standard of bacterial purity indicative of a pure and wholesome water suitable for public supply purposes.

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*Page & Thomas Ltd., Chesham.*

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